

Singer Karen Carpenter

LOS ANGELES, Saturday (AAP-Reuter). — **Karen Carpenter**, of **The Carpenters** brother-and-sister singing duo, died yesterday after being treated for the slimmers' disease anorexia nervosa, her manager, Mr Jerry Weintraub, said last night.

She had been treated for the illness, caused by failure to eat, in New York during the past 18 months. "But I believe she had been cured," Mr Weintraub said.

Officials at the Los Angeles Coroners Office said Miss **Carpenter**, 32, was 1.6 metre tall and weighed 48 kilograms when she died.

A two-hour post-mortem on Miss **Carpenter** found no immediate cause of death and there would be further laboratory tests, a Coroner's Office spokesman said.

Miss **Carpenter** became ill at her parents' home in Downey, a Los Angeles suburb, yesterday and was pronounced dead at the local Downey Community Hospital.

Miss **Carpenter**'s singing partner, her elder brother Richard, and her mother were with her at the hospital when she died half an hour

after being admitted. A hospital spokesman said she had died of a heart attack.

Her mother, Agnes, had found her unconscious in a walk-in closet wardrobe in her bedroom in their home.

The **Carpenters**, who frequently performed at the White House during President Nixon's term, made popular a breezy style that won them three Grammy awards and 17 gold records.

They sold more than 30 million records, and their hits included 'We've Only Just Begun', 'Close To You', 'Rainy Days and Mondays', 'Solitaire' and 'Please, Mr Postman'.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, Richard and **Karen Carpenter** began their musical careers when they were teenagers. Richard played the piano at Yale, where he enrolled at the age of 16, and **Karen** played the drums when she was in high school.

The family moved to Downey, where Richard and **Karen** formed a trio with a friend, bassist Wes Jacobs, and later a six-piece pop-rock group.

But it was **Karen** and Richard



Karen Carpenter

performing together as **The Carpenters** that brought them fame. **Karen**'s voice was their trademark and Richard became known for his musical arrangements of their records.

Paul Grein, an editor of the music magazine *Billboard*, said, "**Karen** always felt in Richard's shadow, even though to most people she was the star of the act. She was in awe of his ability."

Miss **Carpenter**, who had taken a year off to rest, had been planning a comeback with her brother.